

memorandum

DATE: AUG 12 1986

REPLY TO
ATTN OF:

Assistant Regional Director, Refuges and Wildlife, FWS, Atlanta, GA
(AWR/PL)

SUBJECT:

Decision Document for the Acquisition of Additional Lands for Administration/Visitor Information Facilities at St. Vincent NWR

TO:

Regional Director, FWS, Atlanta, GA

The following proposal is categorically excluded from the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) process according to provisions of 516 DM 2, Appendix 1; 516 DM 2.3A; and 516 DM 6, Appendix 1, 1.4A(1) and (4).

PROPOSED ACTION

The Southeast Region proposes to acquire approximately 14 acres for the establishment of administration/visitor information facilities at St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge, Franklin County, Florida.

JUSTIFICATION

The St. Vincent NWR was established in 1968, as a waterfowl sanctuary. The primary feature of the refuge is the four-by-nine mile, 12,358-acre St. Vincent Island, located east of Indian Pass in Franklin County. Originally, refuge headquarters were established on an 86-acre mainland Franklin County tract of tidal marsh and slash pine forest. However, these facilities were severely damaged and ultimately "totalled" by hurricanes Elena (September 1985) and Kate (November 1985), and tropical storm Juan (October 1985). Presently, temporary headquarters are located in an old restaurant, one-half mile west of Apalachicola, Florida, and the Service is leasing docking facilities at an Indian Pass site in Gulf County. Consequently, new administrative, visitor information, and docking facilities are needed for the refuge.

Preliminary site evaluations were conducted on two locations: (1) a tract of land at Indian Pass, Gulf County, and (2) a 14-acre site known as the "11-mile marina." The marina site was reported to be the more desirable and feasible of the two possible locations for several reasons discussed below.

Acquisition of the existing marina site would for the first time assure adequate access to the refuge. State environmental regulations prohibited the Service from constructing docking facilities at the former headquarters site. Also, tourist traffic should be enhanced by the acquisition of the property as it fronts on U.S. Highway 98 and a shell entrance road. This property has much scenic appeal in that it contains an area of large live oaks and it affords a view of the entire north shore of St. Vincent Island. The proposed site is spacious and would accommodate the needed flexibility for initial development and future expansion that could include a modern interpretive facility.

ACQUISITION AUTHORITY

This acquisition is authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, as amended (16 U.S.C. 742 F(a)(5)(1976)).

REALTY REPORT

Pattern of Ownership

The proposal involves the fee acquisition of approximately 14 acres, more or less, for a headquarters site (see attached map). The land is identified as Tract (12) and is currently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Waymon E. Schoeles.

Cost Estimate

The purchase of this tract is estimated to cost approximately \$290,000.

Acquisition Possibilities

There are no anticipated problems concerning the acquisition of this property since the owners are willing to sell the property.

Refuge Revenue Sharing Data

The revenue sharing payment of \$2,175 annually is based on three-fourths of one percent of the \$290,000 estimated purchase price.

Relocation and Property Improvements

Features currently on the property include a docking facility, boat basin, oyster house, a temporary single-story residence, and a freshwater well with clean unlimited water. However, because of the severe hurricane damage to these improvements, relocation expenses are expected to be minimal.

ENGINEERING REPORT

Following acquisition of the property, an engineering planning team will determine the precise nature, extent, and location of the possible development.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

The annual cost of operating and maintaining this facility will be determined at a later date.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

All laws, regulations, policy directives, and Executive Orders identified in 2 REM 2.11, Step 8D, have been considered and complied with during planning of this acquisition proposal. A copy of the Land Acquisition Planning Compliance Certificate is attached.

We request your approval to acquire the subject 14 acres for access to St. Vincent Sound and for the development of administration/visitor information facilities for St. Vincent NWR.

Phillip L. Morgan

Approved:

James H. Williams
Regional Director, Southeast Region

08/13/86
Date

Attachments

Land Acquisition Planning
Compliance Certificate

Project: Expansion of the St. Vincent National Wildlife State: Florida
Refuge for Administration/Visitor Information
Facilities and Water Access

<u>Action</u>	<u>Date</u>
NEPA (check one)	
<u> X </u> Categorical Exclusion	----
<u> </u> EA - FONSI	----
<u> </u> EIS - ROD	----
E.O. 12372 Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs . . .	7/21/86
E.O. 11988 Floodplain Management	7/23/86
E.O. 11990 Protection of Wetlands	7/23/86
Endangered Species Act, Section 7	7/23/86
Coastal Zone Management Act, Section 307	7/11/86
E.O. 11593 Protection of Historic, Archeological, and Scientific Resources	7/21/86
Coastal Barrier Resources Act, Section 6 (CBRA)	N/A
P.L. 91-646 Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act	7/15/86

I hereby certify that all requirements of law, rules or regulations applicable to preacquisition planning for the above project have been complied with.


Regional Director

08/13/86
Date

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION MEMORANDUM

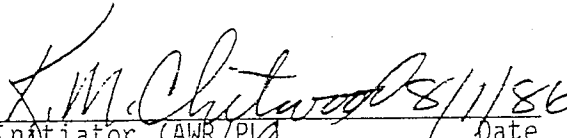

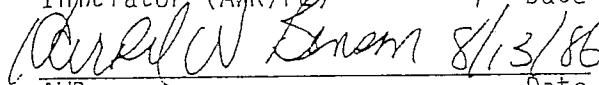
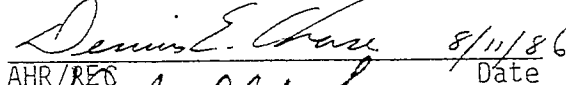
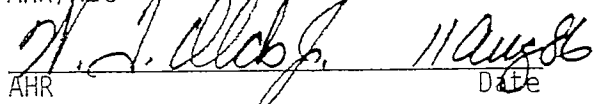
Within the spirit and intent of the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other statutes, orders, and policies that protect fish and wildlife resources, I have established the following administrative record and have determined that the action of:

Expanding the St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge in Franklin County, Florida, by the addition of 14 acres.

- X is a categorical exclusion as provided by 516 DM 2 Appendix 1; 516 DM 2.3 A; AND 516 DM 6, Appendix 1, 1.4 A (1) and (4). No further documentation will be made.
- is found not to have significant environmental effects as determined by the attached Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact.
- is found to have special environmental conditions as described in the attached Environmental Assessment. The attached Finding of No Significant Impact will not be final nor any actions taken pending a 30-day period for public review [40 CFR 1501.4(e)(2)].
- is found to have significant effects, and therefore a "Notice of Intent" will be published in the Federal Register to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement before the project is considered further.
- is denied because of environmental damage, Service policy, or mandate.
- is an emergency situation. Only those actions necessary to control the immediate impacts of the emergency will be taken. Other related actions remain subject to NEPA review.

Other supporting documents:

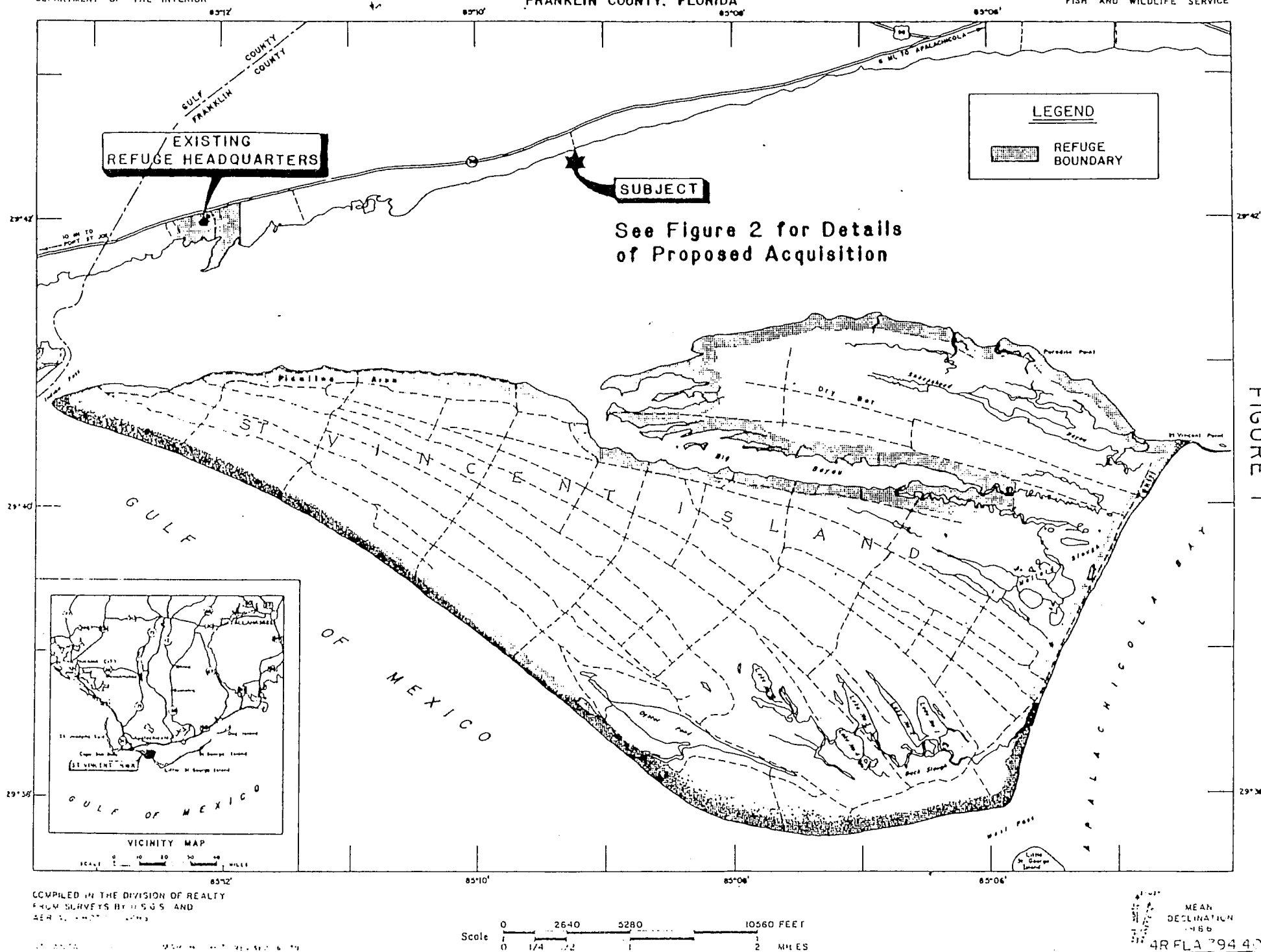
Land Acquisition Planning Compliance Certificate

 Initiator (AWR/PLA) Date	 Regional Director Date
 AWR Date	 AHR/REG Date
	 AHR Date

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FRANKLIN COUNTY, FLORIDA

UNITED STATES
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



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FIGURE 2
Proposed Addition to St. Vincent NWR

